



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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News Release

Focus in on Local History:

Historic Union Cemetery Photo Exhibit on Display at the Beale Memorial Library

Friday, August 1 – Saturday, August 30, 2014

Did you know that Grace Van Dyke Bird, the woman the Bakersfield College library is named after, was the first woman in California to be president of a public community college? This is one of many interesting facts about Kern County's local history. This August, the Kern County Library presents the Historic Union Cemetery's "Forever in Focus" Photo Exhibit, as a part of an overall effort to focus in on Local History and resources available to the public at the Kern County Library. At the Beale Memorial Library, customers have access to a wide array of Local History resources, such as City of Bakersfield directories dating back to 1899, local high school yearbooks dating back to the 1920s, and the Curtis Darling and Local History Map collections. Local History resources are also available online, with the Kern County Library Flickr featuring historical photos.

The "Forever in Focus" Photo Exhibit can be viewed all August at the Beale Memorial Library. The Kern County Library is proud to present the top twelve winning photo entries, which celebrate the unique history and rare beauty of the community's oldest local cemetery. The Historical Union Cemetery was established in 1872, with the burial of Colonel Thomas Baker, the founder of Bakersfield. A prosperous lawyer, politician, and businessman, he hand-selected the cemetery's parcel of land as the place he wanted to "Lay [his] bones." The cemetery is also the resting place to thousands of pioneers and settlers, Civil War soldiers, prominent local families, cowboys, farmers, bankers, and builders – remarkable men and women who have shaped the community's history.

Additionally, in light of the 75th Anniversary of *The Grapes of Wrath* and keeping the legacy of the Dust Bowl alive, on Tuesday, August 19 at 1pm in the Beale Memorial Library, author Oleta Sprague Hamm will be presenting *Migrant Mother: The Untold Story*. Hamm will share the story of a woman led to work in the Kern County fields during the Great Depression.

Sherry Gomez, Director of Libraries

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